

ISO TRANSITION PROGRAM RETAINS CUSTOMER LOYALTY, BOOSTS SALES

ABOUT FOSTER MANUFACTURING CO., INC. Foster Manufacturing Company of Springfield, Missouri, manufactures quick connect pneumatic couplings and a variety of other products for compressed air, pneumatic, and hydraulic equipment. With around 45 employees and over 70 years of experience, Foster Manufacturing is known for its ability to respond to industry needs with new products developed for specific applications. In particular, the company's ZSI-Foster product line has earned a reputation for quality.

THE CHALLENGE. For many years, Foster Manufacturing's dedication to quality has meant the company was a strong adherent to the ISO 9001:2008 standard. "Many of our customers require ISO certification, and even for those customers where it isn't a requirement, ISO certification offers a large degree of credibility and shows our commitment to quality," explained Tim Preusch, Quality Management Representative. However, the company was facing the challenge of transitioning to the new ISO 9001:2015 standard. Foster Manufacturing needed to make the change as quickly and efficiently as possible to ensure they met the new standards within the required deadlines. "Because it's such an important part of our quality promise to customers, it was critical for us to do a great job making the transition from ISO 9001:2008 to the new ISO 9001:2015 standard," said Preusch.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Foster Manufacturing decided to participate in an ISO 2015 Transition Workshop and Readiness Assessment program facilitated by Missouri Enterprise, part of the MEP National Network. The workshop covered important changes coming with the new standard and identified critical areas for company leaders to address. Next, Foster Manufacturing called on transition experts from Missouri Enterprise to perform a gap analysis at the facility, pinpointing specific areas affected by the changes. Missouri Enterprise's Project Manager developed side-by-side comparisons of the old versus the new standard requirements to facilitate the process of transition, then assisted the company with documentation preparation, change implementation, mock-audits, and on-site support.

"Missouri Enterprise's expertise made a challenging change more efficient, and dramatically streamlined the process," said Preusch. After making the necessary investments in plant improvements, Foster Manufacturing successfully passed the ISO audit. The company is now certified to the ISO 9001:2015 standard, supporting \$1.5 million in retained sales.

"A few weeks prior to our ISO certification audit, Missouri Enterprise conducted a mock audit of our newly implemented ISO 9001:2015 processes, and they gave us the confidence to know we were ready for the official ISO review. I've been impressed by Missouri Enterprise's knowledge and professionalism. I highly recommend them to other companies looking to make the upgrade—or for any other reason to be more competitive. Missouri Enterprise truly is our partner in manufacturing."

-Tim Preusch, Quality Management Representative

RESULTS



Increased/retained sales by
\$1,500,000



New investment of **\$105,000**

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